

A Full House Saw A Wonderful Show

The performance of **THE ORDEAL OF OSBERT** and **DOWN IN THE VALLEY** at the DUXBURY PLAYHOUSE Friday night was received by an enthusiastic house who, I believe, would not have sampled its art if the generous (Elbert Harvey, as it leaked out) had not made all his guests. If the applause was indicative, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the Plymouth Rock Center has made many new friends who will attend the coming shows and spread the good word wherever they can.

Friday night should have been labeled "Mr. Harvey's noble effort," for though the cast and management worked hard and well, the only notable triumph was his for filling the house. **OSBERT**, from a story by P. G. Wodehouse, was appealing to me only for the charm of the music, though I did appreciate the excellent performance and bass-baritone voice of **BARR PETERSON** as Sir Petherick in the first opera and as **THOMAS BOUCHE** in the second. He has come a long way since he arrived here and is rapidly achieving top quality. It was, however, the music and **GEORGE POINAR**'S direction of it, that made the show. Next honors should go to **DENTON SNYDER** for his imaginative and convincing sets, and to **NED MacCLOSKEY** for his fine direction. Both plays were excellent theater because of the quality of staging and professional deportment of the characters.

The voices, however, were not so well cast this week. There was an especially noticeable weakness in the baritone department as well as in the lower registers of almost all the voices excepting Mr. Peterson's.

Sydney Murray as **OSBERT** was almost type-cast as the small,

timid, good-looking protagonist. He, too, has a nice quality in the upper range not noticeable when he moves downward. A good actor, too. Lorraine Smorol as Mabel has a sweet voice and a winning manner. Rest of the cast gave their best.

DOWN IN THE VALLEY, too, was excellent theater, well acted throughout, but not quite **THE CENTER**'s top quality in the music department. Poinar had to work this one, a modern opera scored for a larger orchestra, with a much smaller group and that was noticeable. Marilyn Richard as Jennie was best, I would say, and what Loren Driscoll lost vocally as Brock Weaver he made up in the quality of his acting. Barr Peterson of course, as the villain, was

excellent in both departments, but he was the only real bass-baritone on the stage that night. Even as an extra, Mikki Schor in her peasant decolletage rated a rave.

Here again, the sets (Mr. Snyder's of last year, refurbished) were interesting, imaginative, simple, yet eye-filling—and the lighting design of Marjorie Spitz was just right. Everybody worked hard and convinced all that Duxbury without the Music Center would certainly be missing something.

DUXBURY WINS HALL

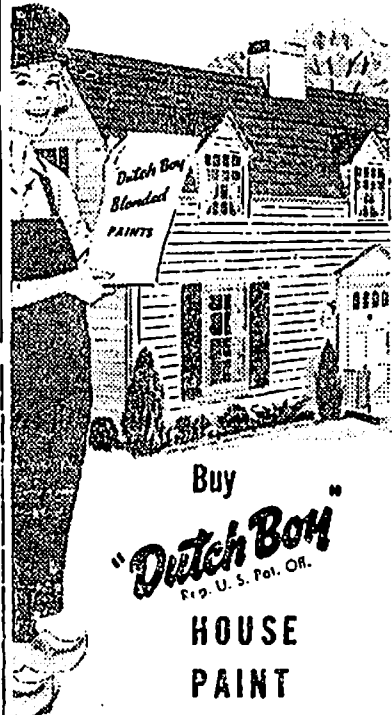
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ner, Lorrie Hoyt and Emily Loring.

The final point score: Duxbury, 7½ points; Hull, 6¼ points; Plymouth 5¼ points.

The two leading crews now go on to Manchester to compete for the Massachusetts Bay championship, for the Waitman cup.

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